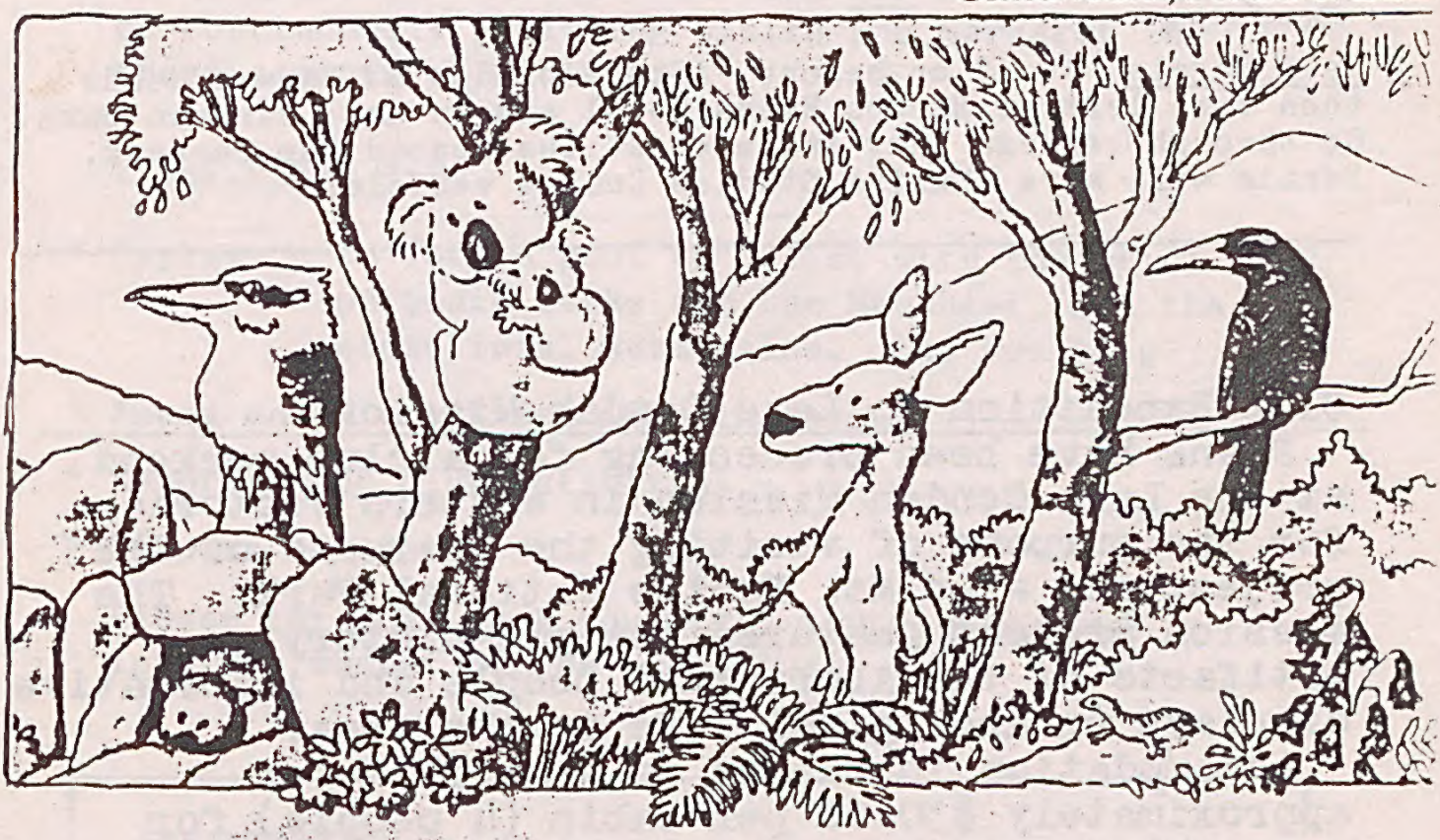
Field Naturalists Club of Ballara

APRIL 1987

EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

Meeting	:	April 3.	Mr. Gavin Cerini - Fauna Plan for the Ballarat Region
Meeting	:	May 1.	Mr. Ray Draper - The Dingo
Excursion	:	April 5.	Barwon Heads - Queenscliff Marine Studie Details Page 2
Excursion	:	May 3.	Enfield Area - Mrs Pat Murphy (Half Day)

Conservation, Forests & Lanc



President	:	Miss H BURGESS	312210
Secretary	:	Mr B DOWLING	432425
Treasurer	:	Mr W WHITESIDE	413544
Editors	:	Mr G BINNS	332282
		Mr L FINK 052	861319

Meetings as specified are held at the Sch of Mines and Industries, Lydiard Street S Art Building, commencing at 7.30 p.m. EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMEN FROM CROCKERS, cnr. STURT AND AR STRONG STS., BALLARAT, at 9.30 a.m. FULL DAY OUTINGS OR AT 1.30 p.m. HALF DAY*

THE TIDE IS RIGHT and there will be no fee for our Sunday (April 5th) excursion to the Marine Studies Centre which will begin from Barwon Heads where we will be met by a staff member and taken to view the rocks and rockpools and the life that they contain. After our rock ramble we will go to the Centre at Queenscliff to see the aquariums including the blue-ringed octopus which changes colour when they annoy it. We will see local fish which look like tropical fish and many strange marine creatures. In addition we will be able to collect and view plankton from the local waters.

In addition there will be time (for those who wish) to take the ferry to Sorrento and Portsea and back. It leaves at 1.00 o'clock and 3.00 o'clock for a 1 and 3/4 hour return trip when you will see seabirds, and perhaps dolphins and seals. That costs $7 a head for adults.

We need to be there by not later than 10.45 or we will miss the best of the low tide. So we should leave from Crockers Corner at 8.30. ...P.S. taking with us old sandshoes, shorts, and/or raincoats!

and...

Meet Bernie 10.45 or before. Cross bridge at Barwon Heads then turn left at Barwon Heads Hotel and on into caravan park. Go through caravan park and meet at the second top carpark. Bernie will have Marine Studies Centre vehicle.

Club Expedition to Lake Condah Mission.

Plans have been proceeding for a club weekend at the Lake Condah Mission in Western Victoria, for the purpose of visiting the features of the project and also Mt. Eccles National Park. The mission project features the pre-history artifacts of the Aboriginal people and informative displays on Aboriginal life in the area.

Accommodation in cabins is available for approximately $30.00 per cabin (4 people), for some thirty visitors. Tentative arrangements have been made for the weekend of 15-17 May. Please consider this venture and notify President Helen if you wish to go and require a booking at the mission.

MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

President Helen is keen to promote member involvement in all aspects of the club's activities, including the general organizational and procedural necessities which will ensure the smooth functioning of the Club. The following members have agreed to act in the roles indicated for the coming year:

S.M.B Meeting Room Opening	- Marie Teesdale
Welcoming of Visitors	- Claire Dalman *
Supper roster coordinator	- Margaret Dowling *
Librarian	- Genny Binns
Editors	- Lyndsay Fink , Greg Binns

(* of course, it is assumed that all members will be continuously assisting Claire and Margaret in these aspects of Club life!)

Other Needs are:

* Typists - to form a pool to assist with the brief periodic tasks for the Newsheet, and the occas ional submission. Can you help?
* Fauna and Flora Lists coordinators -
* Reporters on Club activities -
* Helpers at supper -

Please consider what you might contribute, and inform a member of the executive!

APPRECIATION

The Club is most grateful to Mr. Ken Hibberd of HIBBERDS NURSERY 38 Alfred St, Sebastopol, for sponsoring the printing of the Syllabus Cards for 1987-88.

ANTS AND EAGLES - a report on excursion to Ocean Grove Nature Reserve. 8/3/87

Shot and spread across two or three metres of a barbed wire fence, magnificent head hanging, glazed eye staring at a buzz of flies - most of us can remember our wedge-tailed eagles crucified in this manner.

Ray Hodge, Geelong field nat and our guide at Ocean Grove, told us that a pair of wedgetails had nested for many years in the reserve but that in 1976, one month before the bill protecting them was proclaimed, both were shot.

He also showed us one of the few remaining colonies of Iridomyrmex nitidus, an ant which cares for the egg, larva and pupa of the Small Ant Blue Butterfly in return (apparently) for secretions given off.

15 members enjoyed walking and studying in this 143 hectare reserve about half of which has not been burnt in living memory and remains as it was pre-European settlement.

It was interesting to see uncharacteristic and unburnt grasstrees, very tall and clothed with their grass to the ground; none had the tall burnt trunk we are so used to. There was much Silver Banksia, Golden, hedge and Black Wattle, Casuarina stricta (many of great height) and some Casuarina littoralis.

Some of the main species beneath these were Cranberry Heath. Dianella revoluta and Clematis microphylla. We saw the open seed-pods of milkmaids standing among dry kangaroo grass and on an otherwise bare clay path there were the tiny blue flowers of Pratia. Also fox scats. A recent shoot in the reserve bagged 8 foxes and some got away. This is despite the two metre netting fence designed to keep them out - they have been seen going straight up and over it.

Many trees were flowering including E. leucoxylon and Lightwoods and the Casuarina stricta showed us both male and female trees in flower. The female has a dark red flower held closely to the branches while the male tree flowers are the yellow or orange tips of the needles.

We saw Kangaroo apples both green and yellow, Dianella fruits and a Cramp Ball. The more skilled and knowledgeable botanists wrote up long lists.

Twice we were startled by bronzewing pigeons which rose from our feet with a great whirring like quail. A flock of puzzling sparrow-like birds with yellow wing flashes turned out to be immature goldfinches. Red-browed finches were common and welcome, and New Hollands were plentiful, a brown goshawk worked the area causing frequent chittering among the small birds. We also saw greybreasted silvereyes, grey fantails, scarlet robin, grey thrush and many others. All these birds seemed to me to be a size bigger than normal and very fully coloured but I may have had rose-coloured binoculars.

Although the Reserve is home to many mammals and there was a lot of echidna scratches our mammal list was nil.

Reptile list was a single tiny and very beautiful skink with a bronze head.

BD.

NEW MEMBERS

A sincere welcome to the following new members and the wish that they have a happy and active association with the Club:

Gavin Cerini

Maree Corbett

Arthur Davies

Pat Twomey

March Meeting - Members Night -

The traditional "do-it-ourselves" evening following the Annual Meeting again proved to be full of surprises and variety. Five members volunteered to share their interests and adventures with us, and we are grateful to them all for contributing to the evening.

Peter Dalma n set up his formidable machinery, with its flickering screen, and demonstrated the use of the computer in education as a teaching tool. Peter explained, in particular, the use of a natural history package eg "Woodland Foods". This package enables children to make decisions about, experiments with, and learn about relationships between animals breeding, feeding habits, and survival in ecosystems.

Florence Williamson, through the medium of colour slides, took us to Western Australia to enjoy the botanical treasures of Kings Park, Waneroo and the Darling Range. Somehow a Rock Cod of no mean size, of Sandy Bay, also slithered into view!

Claire Dalman steered us through a pictorial holiday, with the family, to the Flinders Ranges, Quorn and Arkaroola. This spectacular and beautiful country - especially around Wilpena Pound - is always a pleasing experience.

Then even further Northward with Lyndsay Fink. Lyndsay's slides portrayed, Ayres Rock, The Olgas, Mt Connor, Mt Sonder, and the gorges of Kings Canyon and Palm Valley. (We wondered why the Finke River didn't feature strongly in this presentation!) The odd inhabitant such as a handsome Sand Goanna also appeared.

President Helen Burgess completed the event with pictures of more exotic parts, scenes and studies from her trip to Nepal. Helen intrigued us with pictures of Phulchowki Danda, the highest mountain in Kathmandu Valley - Chitwan National Park, Gaida Camp with a one horned rhino and elephants, Sheopuri ridge, guides with rhododendrons, firewood and fodder in baskets -

the Himalayas with Mt. Everest in evidence - and even eucalypts growing in these distant parts.
Variety is the spice of life !

NAME TAGS

There have been requests that all members should wear some means of identification, not only at meetings but also on excursions so that "getting to know one another" may be facilitated.
We are at a time when the Identity Card is a moot point, but it would be nice to be able to address one another by name when enthusing about or discussing some treasure found whilst in the bush! - And there are more and more new faces appearing. Please procure and wear an appropriate name tag, at least until we are familiar with each others names.

Items for Noting.

- The koala survey is still operational and reports are required up until June. Members are urged to fill in survey forms to record sightings - forms are available from secretary Barry.

- The excellent video tapes on Wetlands and Duck identification, produced by the Department of Conservation Forests and Lands, are available from the local office for overnight loan to interested parties. These have been put out to assist with the education of duck shooters and will form part of the proposed testing materials for the gaining of shooters' licenses in the future.

PAPILIONACEAE (Fabaceae)

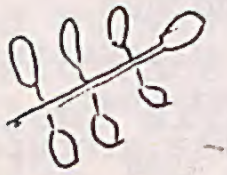
GROUP 1.

(9 stamens united and 1 free)

Three genera in the Ballarat area that are native :- Hardenbergia, Indigofera and Kennedia.
There are four genera of agricultural importance that have been introduced :- Lotus, Medicago, Trifolium and Vicia.

Indigofera

Slender woody shrubs.
Leaf imparipinnate



Standard hairy.

I. australia

(Australian Indigo)

Hardenbergia

Glabrous, trailing herbs or undershrubs.
Stems us. reddish.
Le af of one leaflet

Calyx teeth short.
Standard glabrous (not hairy)
Keel short.
H. violacea
(Purple Coral Pea)

Kennedia

Prostrate, trailing or twining stems, usually pubescent.
Leaves us. of 3 leaflets.

Calyx teeth long.
Standard glabrous.

K. prostrata
(Running Postman)

HH

Field Reports - March Meeting

F. Williamson - Eight Turtledoves frequenting her backyard in Ligar St.

M. Davis - Two Boneseed plants discovered in her garden. Young Turtledoves being fed by adult bird.

M. Dowling - Crested Pigeons at Burrumbeet

J. Netherway - Flock of 800 banded stilts at Lake Beeac in January, and hundreds of Shelduck.